



## RIO GRANDE **WATER FUND**

A Wildfire and Water Source  
Protection Project



06/26/2011 19:40

Las Conchas Fire, Day 1



# **CONCERN #1**

## **Increasing areas of high-severity burn**





# **Cochiti Canyon Flood Dixon's Apple Orchard**

## **August 22, 2011**



# **CONCERN #2:**

## **Post-fire flooding and debris flow**



**Property Destruction**



**Sedimentation**





# CONCERN #3: Water Quality







## CONCERN #4:

### Cost of 2011 Las Conchas Fire



**\$48 million fire suppression cost**  
**\$246 million median total est. cost of the wildfire**



**Kara Walter & Dr. Janie Chermak**

# Proactive Management

## Scale-up strategies to meet the scale of the severe wildfire:

1. Thinning
2. Stream restoration
3. Flood mitigation
4. Fire management





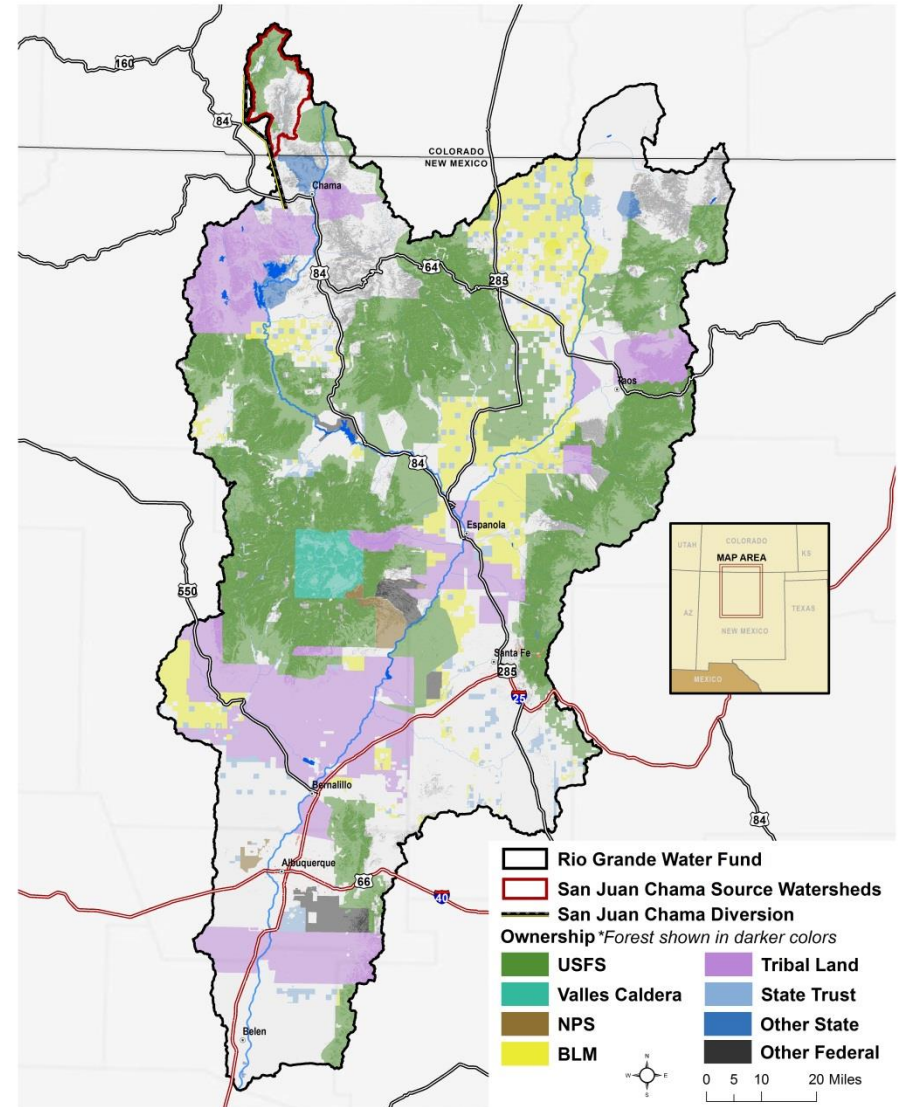


# Large Scale Solutions

Currently treating 3,000-5,000 acres/year in Rio Grande

Scale up to 30,000 ac/yr for 20 years in Rio Grande; \$15 million

Scale up statewide to 50,000 – 100,000 ac/yr



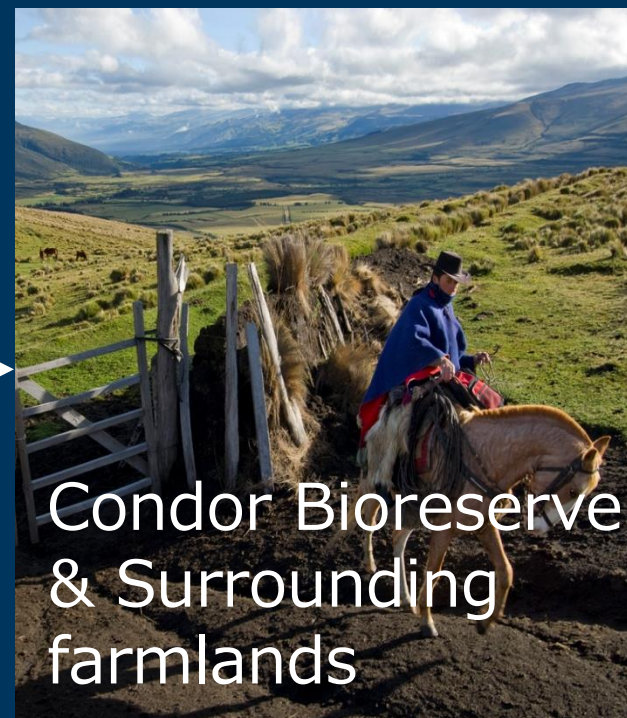


# Model Funding Mechanism: Latin America Water Funds

Users



Providers



Water Fund

Board

Financial  
Fund

\$

\$

CLEAN  
WATER



# Investment in Prevention

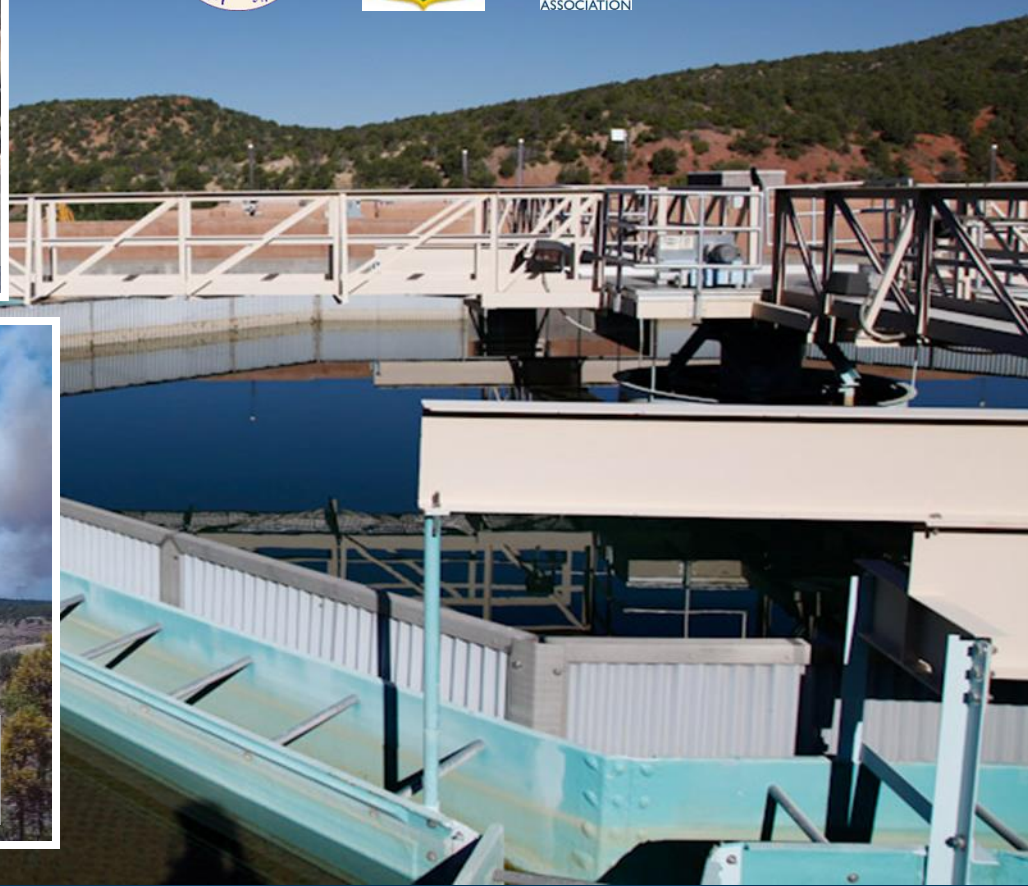


**Denver: \$16.5 million**

**Santa Fe: \$8.5 million**



**Flagstaff: \$10 million**



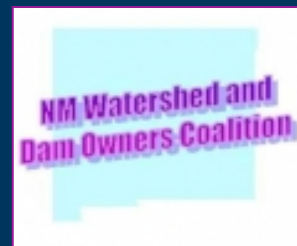


# Early Investors



**Hancock  
Family  
Foundatio**

n



**SANTA FE  
COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION**



**WELLS  
FARGO**



# Watershed Studies

- Where are the highest risk forests and streams?
- What are the economics?
- Is watershed function expected to change?



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# AGENCY STUDY FUNDING

Interstate Stream Commission

Bureau of Reclamation through the Southern Rockies LCC

U.S. Forest Service and NM EMNRD/Forestry Division

U.S. Geological Survey

Bernalillo County

Santa Fe County

Los Alamos County

NM Department of Game and Fish

Albuquerque Bernalillo County Water Utility Authority

Buckman Direct Diversion Project

University of New Mexico

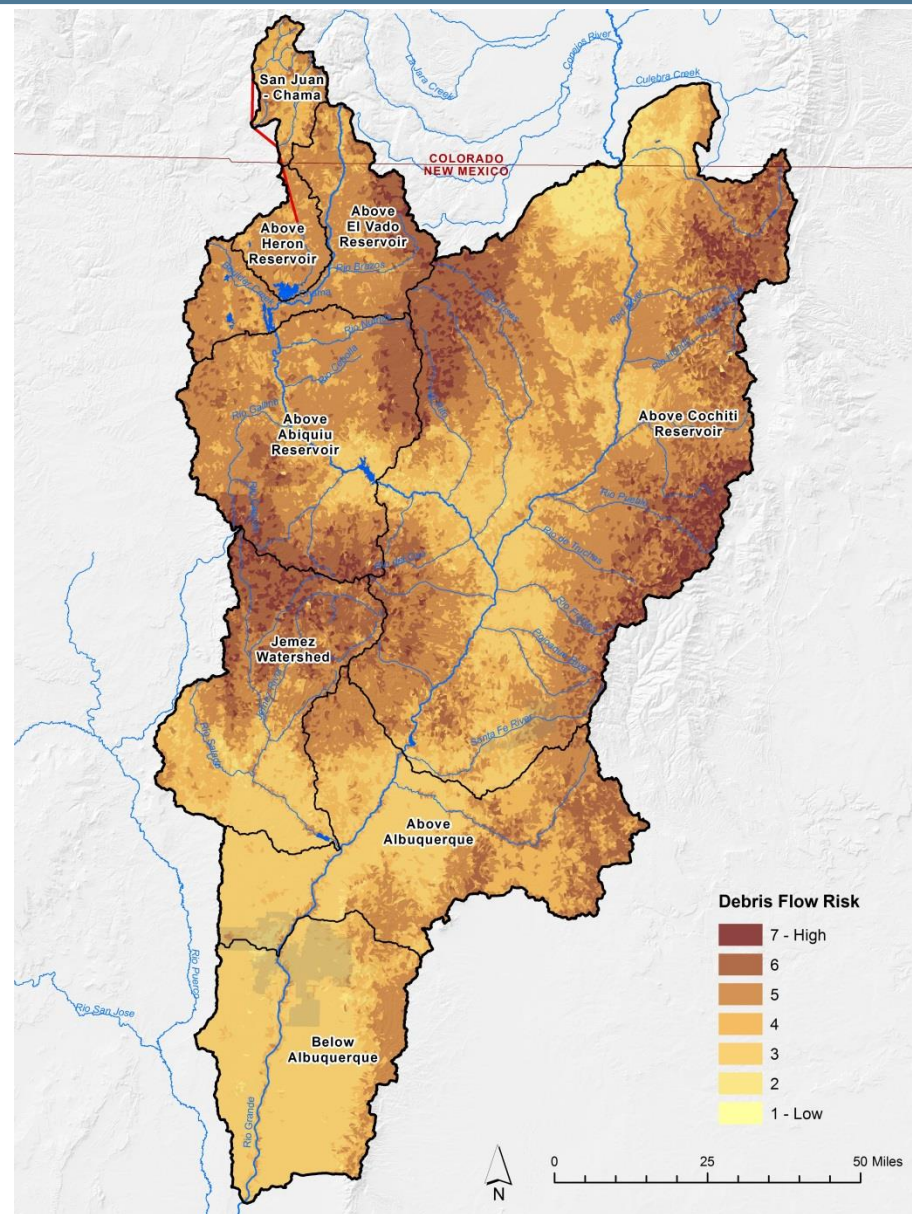
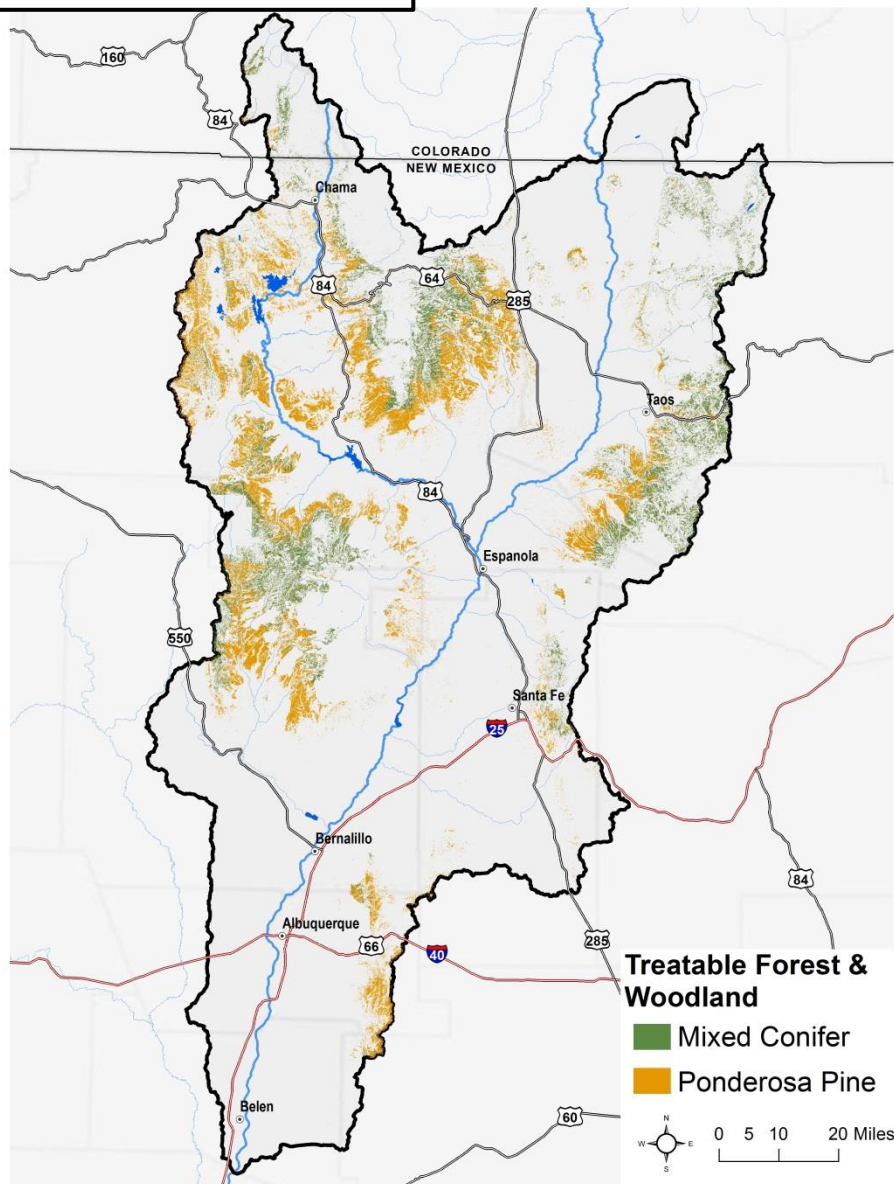
NM EPSCoR

Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers



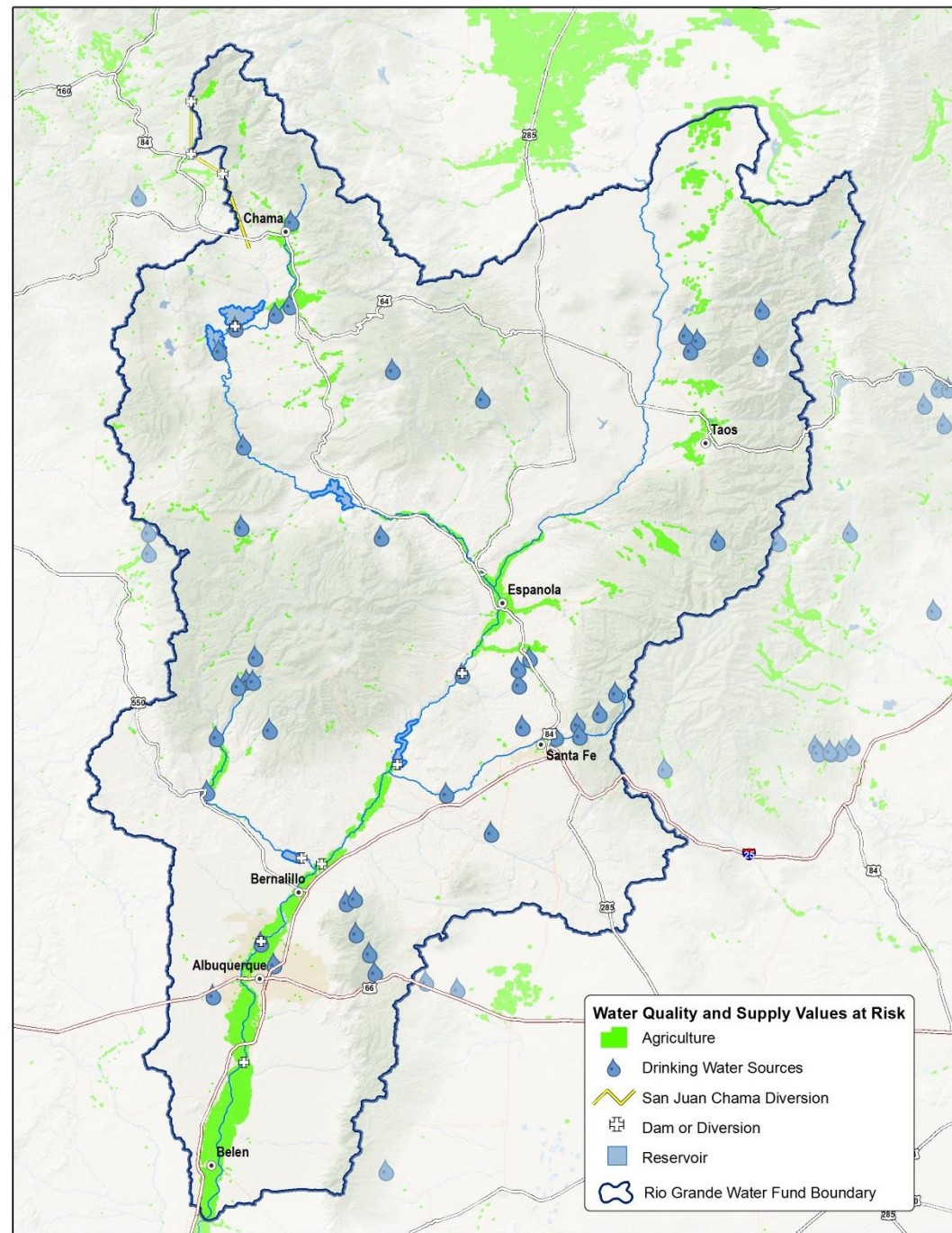
# Treatable Forest and Rapid Assessment of Fire/Debris Flow



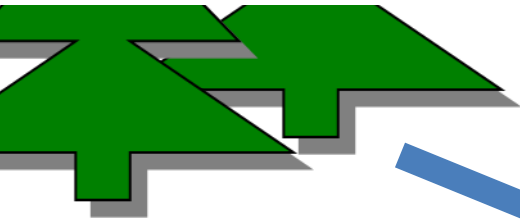
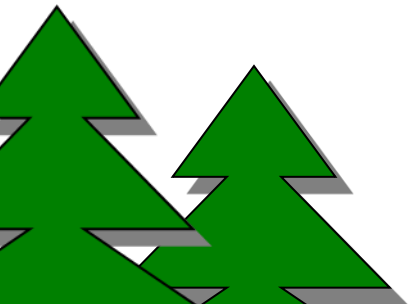


Upstream watershed  
damage has effect on  
downstream water  
users:

1. Reservoirs
2. Dams or diversions
3. Drinking water  
sources
4. Agriculture



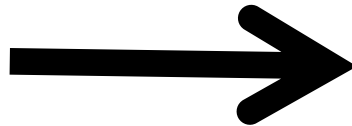
# Possible Uses of Low-Quality Wood from Forest Treatments



**Thermal Heating/Cooling**



**Electricity**



**Biofuels**



**Mulch and Compost**



**Shavings, posts and poles**



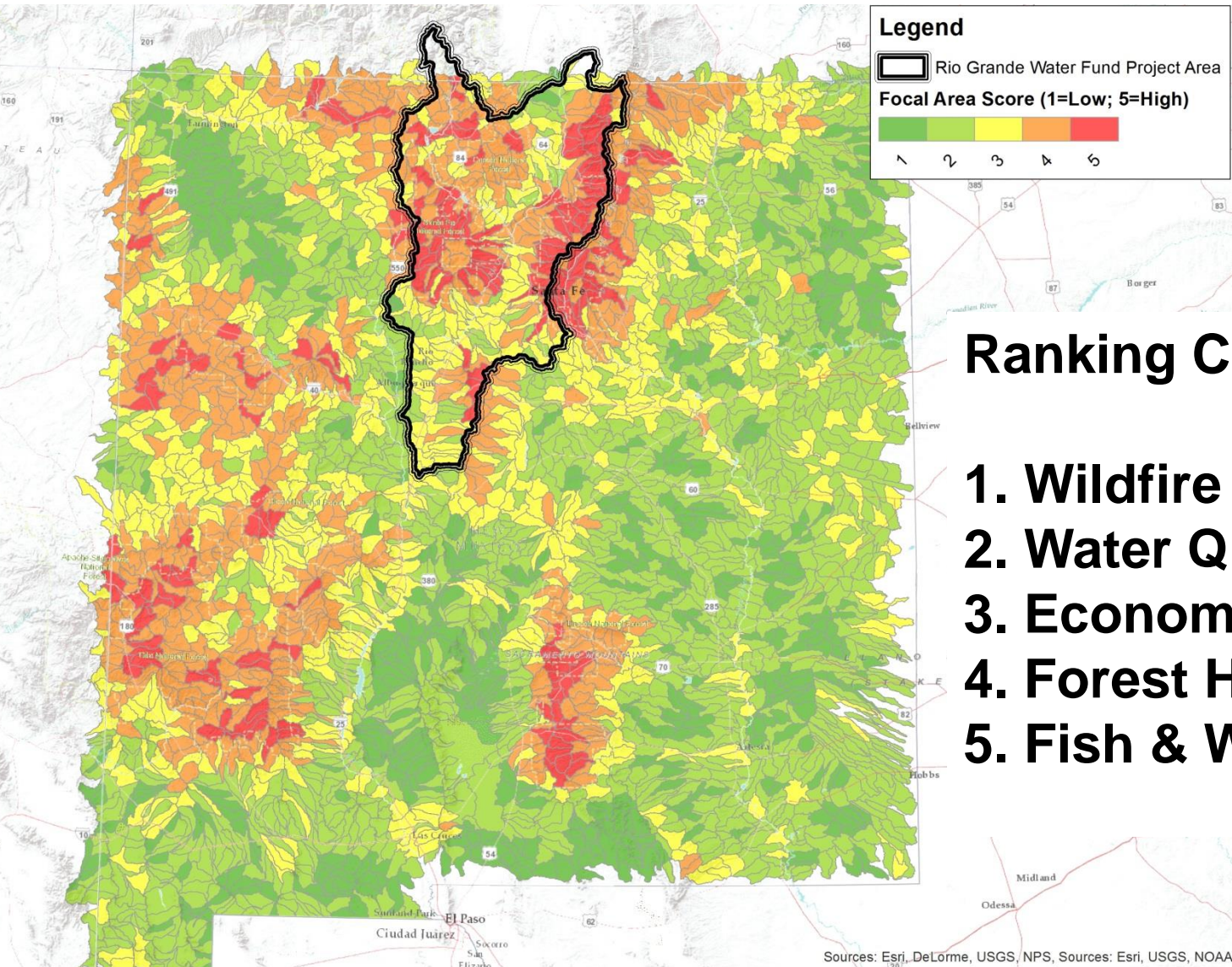
**Lumber and SW Construction**





# RIO GRANDE WATER FUND -- COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## ...to describe the path forward



## Ranking Criteria

1. Wildfire Risk
2. Water Quality/Supply
3. Economic Opportunity
4. Forest Health
5. Fish & Wildlife

# Focal Areas and Project Criteria

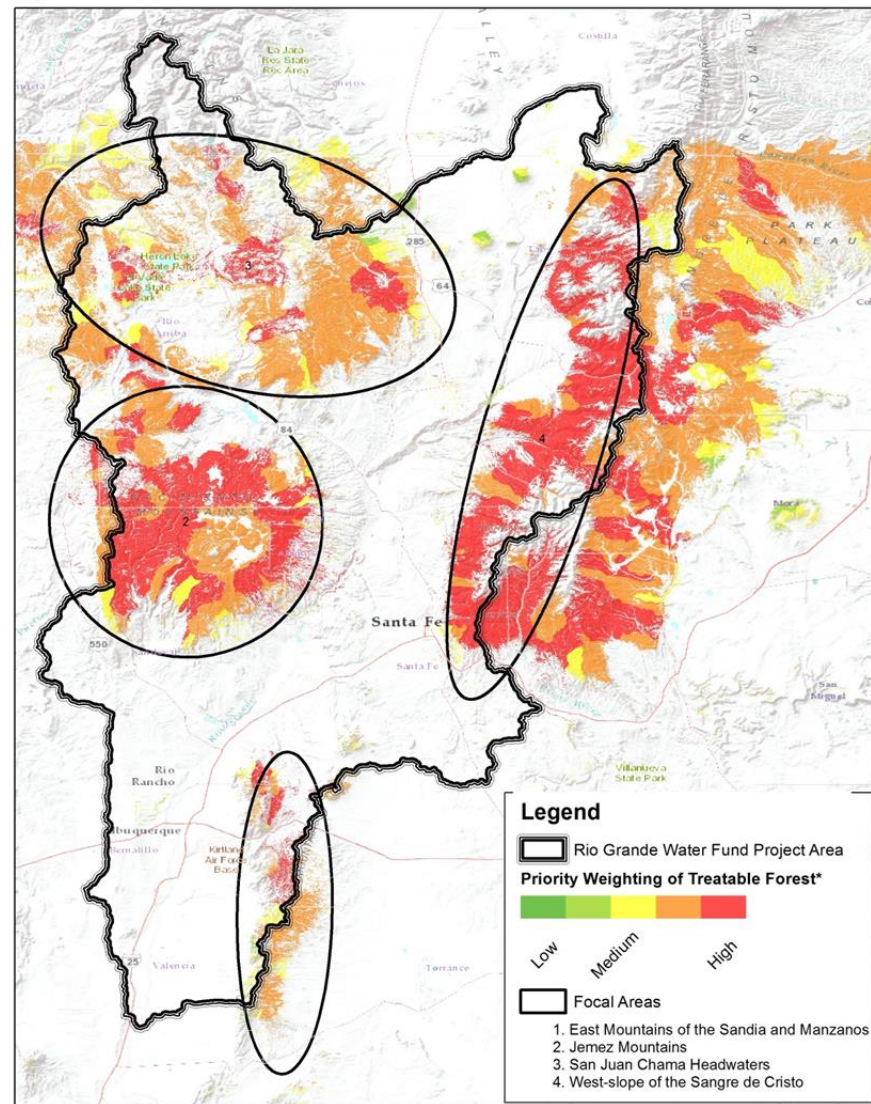
## Focal Areas

1. East Mountains
2. Jemez Mountains
3. West slope Sangres
4. San Juan Chama

## Project Criteria

1. Condition or threat
2. Opportunity
3. Urgency
4. Economic development

Figure 10.1 Final Water Fund Focal Area Prioritization & Identification





# Linking Forests to Faucets with a Distant Municipal Area: Investigating Public Support for Water Security and Watershed Protection

Dadhi Adhikari

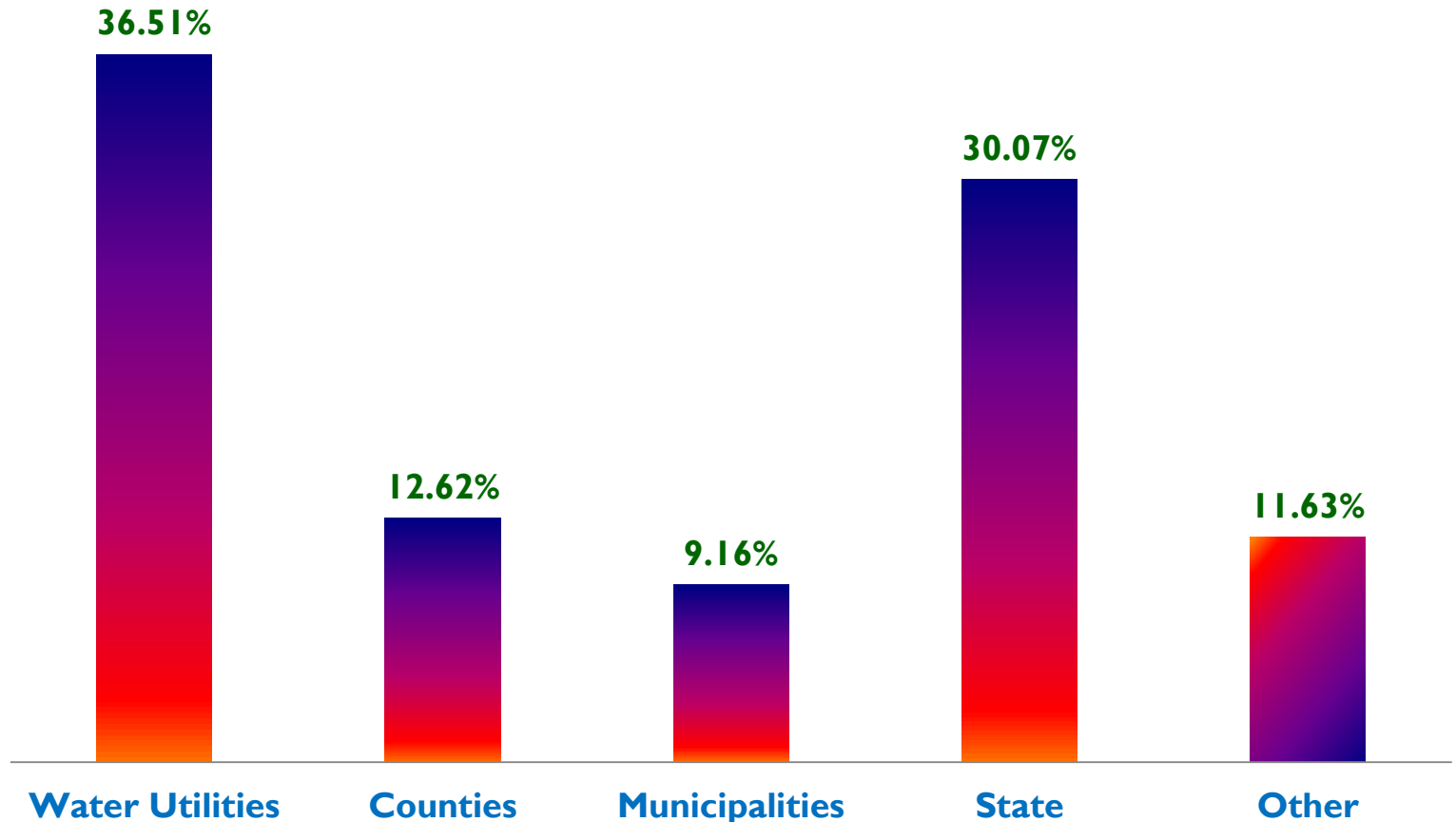
Janie Chermak

Jennifer Thacher

Robert P. Berrens

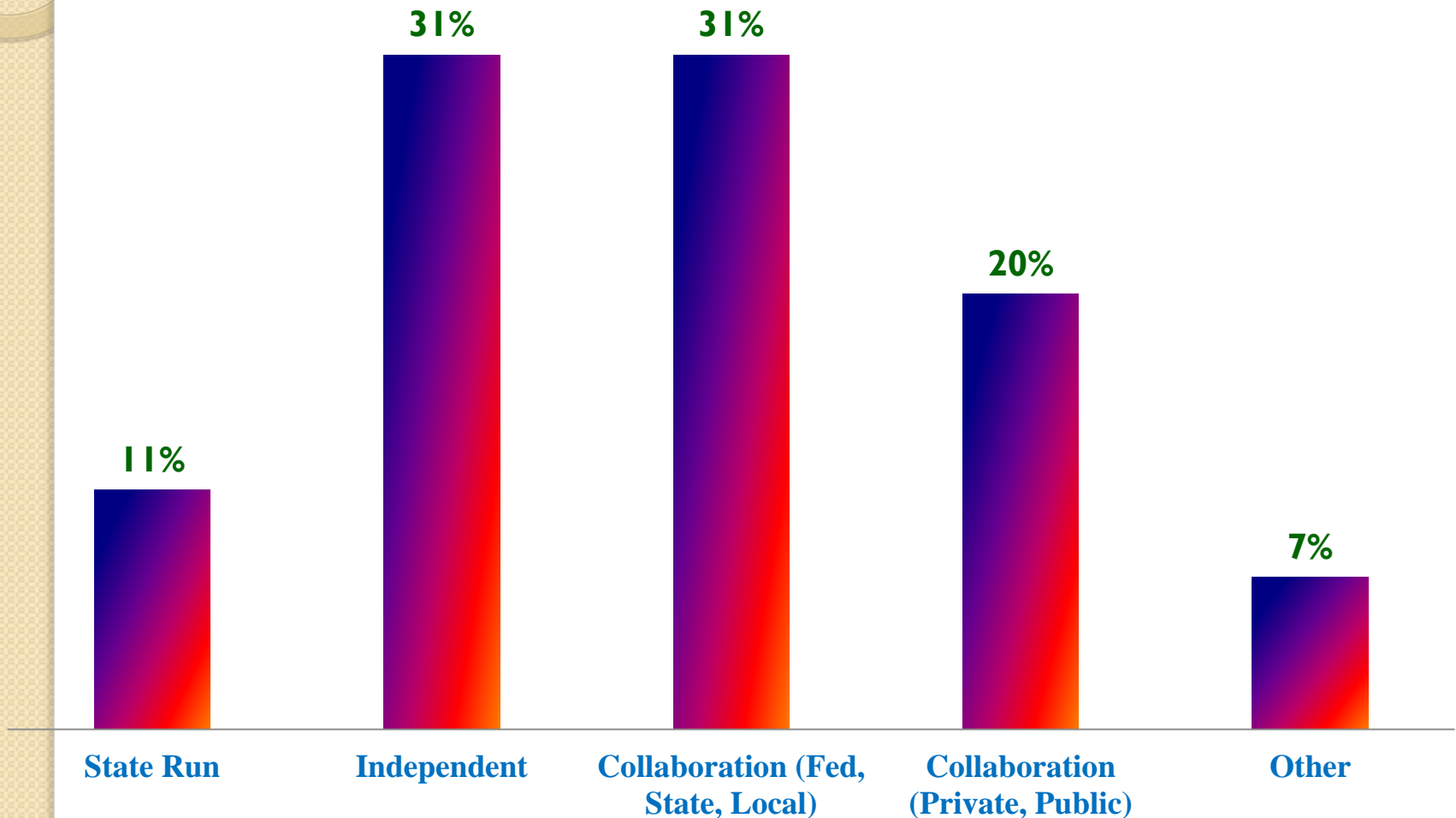
# Who should collect the funds?

## Respondent's Preference for Institutions





# Which structure is best for governing use of funds?



“...direct the appropriate interim committee of the legislature to develop a long-term funding plan for federal, state, local and tribal agencies and diverse stakeholders to cooperate on forest and watershed restoration work in New Mexico.”

underscored material = new  
[bracketed material] = delete

SENATE MEMORIAL 95

51ST LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2014

INTRODUCED BY

Phil A. Griego

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE NEW MEXICO LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL TO DIRECT THE APPROPRIATE INTERIM COMMITTEE TO DEVELOP A LONG-TERM FUNDING PLAN FOR FOREST AND WATERSHED RESTORATION WORK IN NEW MEXICO.

WHEREAS, New Mexico needs a large-scale forest and watershed restoration program; and

WHEREAS, the urgency of the situation has been established in the New Mexico forest action plan, New Mexico forest and watershed health plan and the federal agency land and resource management plans; and

WHEREAS, scientists and stakeholders agree that the current level of active management on forest lands is insufficient to address the scope, scale and pace needed to restore these forests to a more resilient condition; and

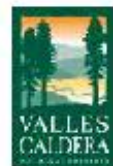
WHEREAS, uncharacteristically large and intense wildfires

.196220.1



# Coordinated, Leveraged, Multi-Partner Solution

- A. Watershed studies – underway with Advisory Board**
- B. Comprehensive plan – completed**
- C. Water fund launch with demo areas – completed**
- D. NM Legislature 2015 – “long-term funding plan for forest and watershed restoration” – in progress**
  - 1. Water Fund with donations, water user fees, corporate sponsors
  - 2. State funding such as Wildfire and Water Source Protection Fund (WAWSP) for treatments and economic development
  - 3. Local/municipal/tribal matching funds for treatments
  - 4. Federal appropriations for hazardous fuels reduction
  - 5. Investment in wood-processing infrastructure
- E. Charter, RFP & project funding – in progress**



WATERBUSH DYNAMICS, LLC



City of Santa Fe Water Division



New Mexico Coalition

